

Urodynamic Investigations - Cystometry

What are Urodynamic Investigations?

- Urodynamic investigations or urodynamics are a series of tests to demonstrate how your bladder is working. It is important to discover the exact bladder problem in order that the best treatment can be offered to you.
- During all your tests a nurse will always be there to support you and answer any questions that you may have.
- When all the tests are completed you will see a doctor or the clinical nurse specialty who will discuss the results with you.
- We often have medical and nursing student's observing the tests we perform. We will ask your permission if they can observe the test and you can request that they leave the room at any time.

What is a Cystometry (Bladder Pressure Test)

This test tells us how your bladder behaves when filling with fluid and on emptying. It takes approximately one hour to do.

- Before the test the nurse will ask you to empty your bladder. You may need to give a specimen of urine and the nurse will tell you if this is needed.
- The test is conducted in a quiet room with a doctor or clinical nurse specialty and nurse present.
- It does not require any needles or anaesthetic so you can carry out your activities as normal after the test.
- You will be asked to wear a hospital gown.
- To do the test the nurse will need to place two small tubes (catheters) into your bladder and one small tube in the back passage or vagina. You might feel a slight discomfort as these tubes are being inserted.
- When you are comfortable the test will begin. Your bladder is filled with sterile water through one of the catheters until you feel a strong desire to go to the toilet.
- One tube is removed from the bladder, you will be asked to stand up. You will be asked to do some coughing and gentle jumping. We also run the water as this can irritate your bladder. All of these may cause you to leak, if you do it is only sterile water that you lose but it is important as this will assess your bladder function.

- You will then be asked to empty your bladder on a specialty toilet with the tubes still in place. The doctor and nurse will leave the room to give you privacy. Once you have emptied your bladder the remaining two tubes will be removed.
- The results of the test will be discussed with you before you go home.
- If you have a vaginal wall prolapse you may have a vaginal pessary inserted for the test. You will be informed whether you need this.

What is a pessary?

We occasionally use a ring pessary to assess patients who have a prolapse. A pessary is a ring of plastic, which gets inserted into the vagina by either a doctor or a nurse. It may feel uncomfortable whilst it is being inserted but once it's in place you shouldn't feel it in the vagina. The ring pessary is removed at the end of the test. However if you would prefer to keep it in till your operation, the nurse will give you some more information regarding the pessary.

Who do I need a pessary?

The prolapse can kink the bladder pipe (urethra), which may hide stress incontinence – leaking with sneeze, cough, and exercise and laughing. Some women, who have surgery for their prolapse, may find that after surgery they develop leakage or find it difficult to empty their bladder. Sometimes these investigations are performed before your operation to decide what type of surgery you need or to see if this improves the emptying of your bladder.

The staff on the ward are always available to discuss this and any other issues with you in full, please do not hesitate to contact the Urodynamics Specialist Nurse / Continence Advisor on 0151 708 9988 Ext 4321 @ Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust.

Some useful websites for further information are www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

This leaflet can be made available in different formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

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